



## FIRE ESCAPES AND SIMILAR STRUCTURES



The City of Lowell is committed to ensuring the safety of residents and visitors. A significant part of that effort requires the involvement and cooperation of all property owners with regard to the overall condition and maintenance of their property.

In an effort to ensure all exterior staircases and fire escapes are safe and compliant with Massachusetts Building Code, property owners, with exterior means of egress such as fire escapes and stairs, are required to ensure the means of egress are **maintained, kept free of snow and ice, and inspected and certified every five years.**

Specifically Chapter 10 of the Massachusetts State Building Code states:

### **1001.3.1 Maintenance of Exterior Stairs and Fire Escapes:**

*All exterior stairways and fire escapes shall be kept free of snow and ice. Exterior stairways and fire escapes constructed of materials requiring the application of weather protecting products, shall have these products applied in an approved manner and shall be applied as often as necessary to maintain the stairways and fire escapes in a safe condition. Weather resistant structural fasteners and connections shall tie the stairways and fire escapes directly into the building structural system.*

### **1001.3.2 Testing and Certification:**

*All exterior bridges, steel or wooden stairways, fire escapes and egress balconies shall be examined and/or tested, and certified for structural adequacy and safety every five years, by a registered design professional, or others qualified and acceptable to the building official; said professional or others shall then submit an affidavit to the building official.*

Code enforcement and fire prevention officials from the City's Division of Development Services and Lowell Fire Department are working now to identify exterior means of egress and contact property owners to confirm compliance. Property owners are also encouraged to be proactive about this critical safety measure and initiate the inspection and certification process.

If you have any questions regarding your responsibilities as a property owner or if you are unsure about how to proceed, contact the Division of Development Services at 978-674-4144 and ask to speak with a Building Inspector. Inspectors are available to meet with you to review requirements and assist with achieving compliance.

The Division of Development Services, in cooperation with the Lowell Fire Department, is working every day to proactively and effectively identify and deal with conditions which may constitute a safety hazard to the public, through code compliance efforts such as this.